

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 4-11, 18-21, 24 and 26 stand rejected. The Examiner is thanked for indicating the allowability of claims 2-3, 12-17, 22-23 and 25. Claims 1, 11, 19, 24 and 26 have been amended. In view of the following, all rejected claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejection of Claims 1, 4-6, 8-11, 18-21, 24 and 26 Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) As Being Anticipated By Thompson

Claim 1

Claim 1 as amended recites retrieving a mission module with a vessel, the vessel operable to transport passengers from a first terrestrial location to a second terrestrial location, the module operable to enable distribution of resources from the module to the vessel.

For example, referring, *e.g.*, to FIGS. 1 and 2 and paragraphs 16-24 of the present application, a ship (vessel operable to transport passengers from a first terrestrial location to a second terrestrial location) 100 includes a hull structure or frame 115 that is designed to accept one or more mission modules 105. Mission modules 105 are designed with different capabilities that, when interfaced with the ship 100, provide the ship 100 with mission-specific functionality for respective types of missions. For example, the mission module 105 may enhance the non-module, *i.e.*, permanent, resources of the ship 100 for compatibility with the type of mission(s) for which the module is designed. Consequently, the ship 100 may include a general operator/control station, which the computer system of the module 105 can configure for the corresponding type of mission via an interface with the ship's computer system. Or, the module 105 may carry extra fuel and supplies for a long range mission.

Thompson, on the other hand, fails to teach or suggest the limitations of claim 1. For example, Thompson, at, *e.g.*, FIGS. 2 and 8-10, col. 2, lines 30-38 and col. 5, lines

39-43, teaches a modular system (module) 8 that can be carried by an NSTS Orbiter (vessel) 32. The system 8 includes standoff structures that provide means for distributing utilities such as electrical power, data lines, fluid lines to cylinder body sections 10 from a front endcap 14. As such, the system 8 is operable to receive resources from the Orbiter 32. However, there is no indication in Thompson that the system 8 is operable to enable distribution of resources from the system to the Orbiter 32.

Claims 11, 19, 24 and 26

Claims 11, 19, 24 and 26 are patentable for reasons similar to those discussed above in connection with claim 1.

Claims 2-10, 12-18, 20-23 and 25

Claims 2-10, 12-18, 20-23 and 25 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 1, 11, 19 and 24.

**Rejection of Claims 1, 7 and 19 Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) As Being Anticipated By
Cushing**

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites retrieving a mission module with a vessel, the installed module operable to enable distribution of resources from the module to the vessel.

In contrast, Cushing fails to teach or suggest the limitations of claim 1. For example, Cushing, at, e.g., FIGS. 1-2 and the abstract, teaches a portable power supply (which the Examiner regards as a mission module) for providing electrical service to cargo storage containers stowed on a ship (vessel) deck. As such, while Cushing appears to teach that the power supply enables distribution of resources from the power supply to cargo of the ship, Cushing fails to teach or suggest that the power supply enables distribution of resources from the power supply to the ship itself.

Claim 7

Claim 7 is patentable by virtue of its dependency from claim 1.

Claim 19

Claim 19 as amended is patentable for reasons similar to those discussed above in connection with claim 1. Moreover, claim 19 recites disengaging a mission module from a vessel, the mission module located in a bay of the vessel.

In contrast, Cushing discloses engaging the power supply with and disengaging the power supply from cargo storage containers stowed on a ship. However, Cushing fails to teach or suggest engaging the power supply with or disengaging the power supply from the ship itself.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, claims 1-26 are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.


If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 425.455.5575. **The Applicant's attorney respectfully requests the Examiner to telephone the undersigned prior to issuing an Advisory or Office Action that rejects any pending claim in this case.**

In the event additional fees are due as a result of this amendment, you are hereby authorized to charge such payment to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 10/21/05


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